

Middle School Lesson 1

Teaching with Images: The Image of Lincoln as an Heroic Citizen

Opening Quote*

“If I were to try to read, much less answer, all the attacks made on me, this shop might as well be closed for any other business. I do the very best I know how—the very best I can; and I mean to keep doing so until the end. If the end brings me out all right what’s said against me won’t amount to anything. If the end brings me out wrong, ten angels swearing I was right would make no difference.”

-Abraham Lincoln, *The Inner Life of Abraham Lincoln: Six Months at the White House*, by Francis B. Carpenter

Learning Objectives

- Understand and define character traits and virtues of citizenship
- Learn about Lincoln as a citizen by observing details in pictures
- Create goals so students can practice good citizenship
- Improve visual literacy skills of analysis and synthesis
- Form summaries and conclusions from visual images
- Connect the lesson to students’ lives as citizens

Materials Needed

* *Indicates material included at the end of the lesson.*

- For the teacher:
 - Opening Quote*
 - Excerpt from “*Proceedings of the Supreme Court of the State of Indiana on the Announcement of the Death of Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States*”*
 - Images of Lincoln (choose from the images included in this packet or one from the Webliography)
- For the students:
 - Pencils, pens, notebooks
 - Photo Analysis Worksheet*
 - Excerpt from “*Proceedings...*”*

Guiding Questions

- What does one really see when viewing an image of Lincoln?
- What is a good citizen?
- What characteristics must one have to be a good citizen?
- What virtues should citizens possess?
- Could you be a heroic citizen?

Suggested Lesson Procedure

- Divide the class into groups or pairs.

- Ask students what they know about Abraham Lincoln.
- Introduce the Opening Quote*—allow the students to work in pairs to figure out what the quote is saying. Allow brief discussion of the concept of ‘the very best I can.’
- Introduce the selected images of Lincoln and the Photo Analysis Worksheet.* You may also have a visual of the Photo Analysis Worksheet* on the overhead.
- Use questions from the Photo Analysis Worksheet* to frame discussion of your chosen image or images.
- Conclude with a review of the Opening Quote* on the board and what the statement, “I do the very best I know how” must have meant to Abraham Lincoln.

Exit Activity

- Have the students write a one-sentence summary of the virtues of Lincoln that they discovered through the photo analysis.
- Have the students make a large letter “T” on their paper. On the left side, list their own virtues of good citizenship. On the right side, list the action that would exhibit that virtue.

For example:

<u>Virtues of Good Citizenship</u>	<u>Actions of a Good Citizen</u>
Kindness	Walking the neighbor’s dog
Respect	Picking up trash in the hallway
Wise	Making good decisions

- If time permits, the presenter may also use an excerpt from the “*Proceedings...*”.* Post the following virtues and have students listen for the following virtues as the excerpt is read.

Virtues of Lincoln—excerpt from “*Proceedings...*”.*

Kindness of heart	Honesty	Unselfishness	Good humor
Confidence	Self-possessed	Goal oriented	Dauntless
Cheerful	Hopeful	Persistent	Self-reliant
Firm	Great intellect	Decision maker	Wise
Simplicity of tastes and habits		Deep sympathy for the common people	
Unflinching faith in God			

Extending the Lesson

“Making Good Citizenship Part of the Classroom”.* *A bullet-point list that can be used to start a discussion about civic rights and responsibilities including suggested activities that can be used to reinforce the learning objectives in this lesson.*